

[English]

Afforestation

3732. DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether a sizeable portion of the forest reserve land in the country has been illegally encroached upon;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken to vacate these encroachments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (c) Some portion of the forest reserve land has been encroached upon by people. The details regarding encroachments on forest land are maintained in the States/Union territories concerned, at divisional level. Government of India has taken following measures to prevent encroachment of forest land :

- (i) National Forest Policy, 1988 states that encroachment of forest land has been on the increase and this trend has to be arrested and effective action taken to prevent its continuance.
- (ii) The Forest Policy also stipulates that people's participation in management of the forests should be encouraged.
- (iii) Under the Indian Forest Act, 1927 and Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, encroachment of forest land has been declared an offence.
- (iv) State Governments carry out eviction of encroachments alongwith Revenue authorities.

[Translation]

Terror by Wild Cats

3733. SHRI JAGATVIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government are aware of the terror created by the wild cats in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh recently;
- (b) if so, the number of persons who became victims thereof; and
- (c) the action being taken by the Government to deal with the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) and (b) According to the State Govt. of Uttar Pradesh, no such incident has been reported.

- (c) Does not arise.

Workshop on Forests

3734. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS :
SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether a National workshop was held recently which was attended by the forest officers and some leading NGOs;
- (b) if so, whether the participants have requested/suggested to strike balance between the conservation of forest and traditional rights of communities in the draft forest bill;
- (c) if so, the details of suggestions made in the workshop; and
- (d) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Suggestions to strike a balance between conservation of forests and traditional rights of the communities were made by some of the participants.

- (c) Main recommendations are as under:
 - There should be a legal definition of "forests".
 - The amended Act should consolidate all Central and State forest laws.
 - Joint Forest Management rules should be incorporated in the new Act.
 - Problems of local people living in and around forests should be considered as an important factor in reserving/notifying or dereserving/denotifying a forest area.
 - There should be a time limit for settlement of rights and it should be on the basis of carrying capacity of the forest area.
 - Proposals for dereservation/denotification to be cleared by a statutory committee comprising of government and non-government members.